

8/21/77  
Department of State

INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-15

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MSCE-00 SSO-00 ICARE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2018

SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6815

E.O. 12065: XDS-1 8/21/89 (CASTRO, RAUL H.) OR-M  
TAGS: AR SHUM  
SUBJ: ☒ HUMAN RIGHTS: AMBASSADOR REVIEWS HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS WITH  
GENERAL VIOLA

REF: BA 6782

1. ☒ ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: GENERAL VIOLA EXPRESSED UTTER AMAZEMENT OF USG'S OBJECTIONS OVER RECENT RAIDS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ESTABLISHMENTS. HE ARGUED IT WAS A JUDICIAL FUNCTION, WHOLLY WITHOUT THE SCOPE OF THE EXECUTIVE. VIOLA WAS UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND HOW CRITICISM COULD BE LEVELLED AT WHAT IS A LEGAL, INDEPENDENT ACT OF THE JUDICIARY. HE ALSO STRONGLY DENIED THE EXISTENCE OF ANY CLANDESTINE CAMPS AND APPEARED TO BE WOUNDED ON WHAT HE CALLED CHARGES OF KILLING PRISONERS. VIOLA ALSO EXPLAINED SOVIET MILITARY ARE IN ARGENTINA ON A FROLIC OF THEIR OWN, AT REQUEST OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR, BUT IN NO WAY WILL GOA PERMIT COURSES TO BE TAUGHT BY SOVIETS. VIOLA STATED TIMERMAN RELEASE IS STILL PROBABLE BUT NOT TOO LIKELY AT THE MOMENT. HE WAS FURNISHED WITH TWO NAMES OF RECENT DISAPPEARED SO HIS OFFICE CAN CHECK ON THEIR STATUS. END SUMMARY

3. I WAS UNABLE TO MEET WITH GENERAL VIOLA LAST WEEK DUE TO HIS OFFICIAL COMMITMENTS IN PARAGUAY. HE AGREED TO CONFER WITH ME IN HIS OFFICE YESTERDAY (AUG. 20) AT 18:30 HRS. MULTIPLE TOPICS WERE DISCUSSED.

4. RAID ON HUMAN RIGHTS ESTABLISHMENTS: GENERAL VIOLA PROCLAIMED SURPRISE AT USG CRITICISM OVER COURT-ORDERED RAIDS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ESTABLISHMENTS. HE PROFESSED SHOCK AT A FOREIGN GOVT. OBJECTION TO A LEGAL ACT PERFORMED BY AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY. HE EMPHASIZED THERE WAS NO WAY THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH WOULD DARE INTERFERE WITH A JUDICIAL ACT. HE WENT INTO A LONG DISSERTATION ON HOW GOA WAS SUPPORTING AND ENCOURAGING JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE. I EXPRESSED DEEP APPRECIATION TO VIOLA OVER THIS FACT INASMUCH AS I HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY IN THE U. S. FOR OVER SEVEN YEARS. I EXPLAINED TO VIOLA USG WAS NOT QUESTIONING THE LEGALITY OF JURISDICTION OF THE COURT OVER THE SUBJECT MATTER. I TOLD HIM DEPARTMENT WAS CONCERNED OVER BAD IMAGE CREATED OVER RAIDS AND ALSO IT APPEARED TO BE A PRE-DETERMINED ACT TO IMPAIR THE FINDINGS OF IAHRC DURING ITS VISIT NEXT MONTH. VIOLA AGREED AND STATED THE TIMING WAS MOST UNFORTUNATE. HE ALSO SAID HIS GOVT. WAS SICK OVER THE EVENT. THEY WOULD HAVE MUCH PREFERRED THAT THIS MAVERICK JUDGE WOULD HAVE STAYED AT HOME AND DONE NOTHING. VIOLA STATED SOMEONE IN GOVT TRIED TO APPROACH THE JUDGE AFTER THE ACT, BUT TO NO AVAIL, AS THE JUDGE IS FEELING HIS OATS AND DRUNK WITH POWER. HE DESCRIBED THE JUDGE AS BEING A "PELOTUDO" AND FOR THE SAKE OF NOT BEING MUNDANE I SHALL NOT TRANSLATE IT. IT'S AN EXPLETIVE OF THE WORST KIND IN ARGENTINA, CERTAINLY NOT FITTING FOR A JUDGE.

5. JACOBO TIMERMAN: AFTER LISTENING TO ALL THE SWEET NOTES ON JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE, I TOLD VIOLA IT WAS EXTREMELY

UNFORTUNATE JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE HAD NOT BEEN HONORED IN THE TIMERMAN CASE. I AGAIN REMINDED VIOLA OF TIMERMAN'S EXONERATION BY THE MILITARY TRIBUNAL AND BY THE ARGENTINE SUPREME COURT. I ASKED HIM WHY JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE HAD BEEN SCRAPPED IN THE TIMERMAN CASE. VIOLA AGREED ON THE INCONSISTENCY AND FOR THE HUNDRETH TIME SINCE I HAVE KNOWN HIM, HE REPEATED HIS DESIRE TO HAVE TIMERMAN RELEASED. HE THEN ASKED ME IF I HAD TALKED TO GENERAL SUAREZ MASON, ALLEGED CULPRIT BEHIND JACOBO'S INCARCERATION. I TOLD VIOLA I HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER ONCE WITH SUAREZ MASON, BUT WAS WAITING FOR ANOTHER OPPORTUNE MOMENT TO AGAIN DISCUSS THE SUBJECT. IT WAS CLEAR TO ME VIOLA FELT TIMERMAN'S RELEASE WAS PROBABLE BUT NOT IMMINENT--CERTAINLY NOT WITHIN THE NEXT TEN DAYS.

6. LAW OF THE SEA: I EXPLAINED TO VIOLA MEDIA PRESENTATIONS ON USG POLICY ON LAW OF THE SEA WAS "MUCH TO DO ABOUT NOTHING". VIOLA AGREED MEDIA HAD GIVEN APPEARANCE US DESTROYERS, SUBMARINES AND GUNBOATS WERE ON ARGENTINE SHORES READY TO STRIKE. HE ACCEPTED USG HAD NO DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTENTIONS TOWARDS ARGENTINA REFERENCE LAW OF THE SEA.

*DF*  
*CS (SC law sec)*  
*Q Aug 20/79*

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/TPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Declassify on \_\_\_\_\_ Reason \_\_\_\_\_

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7. CLANDESTINE CAMPS AND KILLING OF PRISONERS: I TOLD

VIOLA LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL RUMORS WERE WIDESPREAD--  
BEING REPORTED BY SERIOUS AND HONORABLE PEOPLE--THAT  
ARGENTINA WAS FLOODED WITH CLANDESTINE CAMPS, HOLDING  
PRISONERS, WHO WERE BEING EXECUTED PRIOR TO IAHRC ARRIVAL.  
ONE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT VIOLA HAD SAT ON A TACK AS HE  
JUMPED UP AND STRONGLY PROTESTED SUCH ALLEGATIONS. HE  
REMINDED ME THIS SUBJECT HAD BEEN RAISED BY ME, IN AN  
INFORMAL FASHION, NUMEROUS TIMES AND HE HAD ALWAYS DENIED  
SUCH CHARGES. VIOLA STATED HE FELT MY RAISING THE POINT  
AGAIN TODAY WAS IN A MORE SERIOUS VEIN DUE TO THE PENDING  
ARRIVAL OF IAHRC. HE TOLD ME THAT IF WE (USG) HAD SUCH  
BRILLIANT INTELLIGENCE SOURCES THEN GOA WOULD APPRECIATE  
OUR EMBASSY COMING BEFORE THE JUNTA AND OUTLINE NAMES AND  
LOCATIONS OF THESE CLANDESTINE CAMPS AND THE WHEREABOUTS  
OF THESE PRISONERS. I MAKE IT CLEAR TO VIOLA THESE RUMORS  
WERE NOT ATTRIBUTABLE TO ANY USG SOURCE. HE SAID HE WAS  
GRATEFUL FOR THIS. BY THIS TIME VIOLA HAD COOLED OFF AND HE  
RETURNED TO HIS SAME CHARMING SELF. HE CHARACTERIZED THESE  
RUMORS AS JUST PLAIN, FOOLISH TALK.

8. TWO DISAPPEARED PERSONS. I HAVE VIOLA THE DATES AND  
FACTS OVER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JUAN CARLOS ANZORENA, 28,  
ON AUGUST 12. HE WAS ALSO GIVEN THE NAME OF PABLO ARMANDO  
LEPISCOPO, WHO DISAPPEARED ON AUGUST 5. I TOLD VIOLA USG  
WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR HIS ASSISTANCE IN DETERMINING THE  
STATUS OF THESE TWO PEOPLE. HE PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE  
MATTER AND GIVE ME A REPORT.

9. SOVIET OFFICERS: AN EXPRESSION OF US CONCERN WAS GIVEN  
VIOLA OVER THE VISIT OF A SOVIET GENERAL AND SEVERAL OFFICERS  
TO ARGENTINA. VIOLA LOOKED AT ME AND SAID "YOUR GOVERNMENT  
REALLY ISN'T CONCERNED ABOUT SOVIETS VISITING US?" I  
REPLIED THESE WEREN'T JUST SIMPLE SOVIET CITIZENS BUT MILITARY  
PERSONNEL SUPPOSEDLY COMING TO LECTURE AND PERHAPS TEACH AT  
THE WAR COLLEGE AND OTHER MILITARY FACILITIES. HE THEN  
EXPLAINED THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD APPROACHED THEM ON THE  
POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A MILITARY CONTACT WITH SOVIET  
OFFICERS. VIOLA ALSO EXPLAINED JUNTA MEMBERS HAD CONSIDERED  
THE SOVIET OFFICERS VISIT AND AGREED TO PERMIT THEM TO VISIT  
THE COUNTRY FOR ABOUT ONE WEEK AND TALK AT DIFFERENT MILITARY  
INSTITUTIONS. VIOLA SAID UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD THE  
SOVIETS EVER BE PERMITTED TO GIVE COURSES ANYWHERE IN  
ARGENTINA. HE ALSO STATED THERE WAS A PROBABILITY OF  
ARGENTINE OFFICERS VISITING SOVIET UNION SOON. HE EXPLAINED  
NO ARGENTINE OFFICER WOULD EVER BE PERMITTED TO TAKE ANY  
COURSE IN THE SOVIET UNION. TO STRENGTHEN HIS CASE, VIOLA  
STATED GOA HAD NOT PURCHASED ANY MILITARY MATERIAL FROM  
THE SOVIETS, EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ADVANTAGEOUS--  
PRICE WISE. VIOLA STATED IT WAS DISGUSTING HOW IN THE UN  
VOTING--AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS--ARGENTINA  
WAS ABLE TO GET SUPPORT FROM THE SOVIETS AND OTHER COMMUNIST  
COUNTRIES AND YET BE REJECTED BY THE US AND OTHER SUPPOSEDLY  
DEMOCRATIC NATIONS. HE SAID THE USG WAS FORCING ITS HAND  
AND SHOWING THEM HOW TO DEAL WITH TRADITIONAL USG ENEMIES.

10. COMMENT: VIOLA EXPRESSED SINCERE CONCERN OVER THE  
IAHRC VISIT AND HIS VIEW AS ARGENTINA WOULD FARE MUCH BETTER  
THAN MOST PEOPLE EXPECTED. HE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT UNDER  
NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE IAHRC VISIT BE DELAYED OR  
CANCELLED. THIS SAME VIEW WAS SHARED BY THE FOMHIN DURING  
HY LAST MEETING. IN FACT THE FOMHIN TOLD HE MUCH PRESSURE  
WAS BEING EXERTED ON DR. AGUILAR, PRESIDENT OF IAHRC, BY  
US HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS TO CANCEL THE VISIT. FOMHIN  
QUOTED AGUILAR AS STATING THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD  
THE VISIT BE CANCELLED REGARDLESS OF WHEREVER THE PRESSURES  
CAME FROM. READERS SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THIS MEETING TOOK  
PLACE BEFORE VIOLA LEARNED OF THE AUGUST 20 SPOKESMAN'S  
STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT EMBASSY WAS INVESTIGATING REPORTS  
OF KILLING PRISONERS.  
CASTRO

UNCLASSIFIED